

CHAPTER 2

I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS RELATED TO LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY WORKFORCE – 2003

The size of the local public health agency workforce decreased in each of the past two years. From 2001 to 2002, the total number decreased by ninety-seven. From 2002 to 2003, the number decreased again by thirty-six in spite of the fact that, during 2003, thirty-two agencies were able to hire planners, and/or epidemiology specialists, and/or public information officers. Approximately seventy individuals were hired into these new positions with federal funds provided through a contract intended to improve preparedness to respond to public health emergencies. The number of environmental health specialists increased from 2002; however, there was a decrease in the number of registered nurses. The benefits provided for local public health employees remained stable, and there were increases in the average annual salary earned by several categories of staff. (See chart at the end of this chapter that shows the breakdown of types of local agency staff.)

TOTAL LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

Local public health agencies in Missouri employ 3,217 individuals, 81% of whom work full-time. Moderate turnover in staff is verified by the fact that 13% of the current workforce was hired within the past year. (See Graphs 7.1 & 7.2 and Data Tables 7.1 and 7.2)

BENEFITS FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS

Full time workers in 93% of local public health agencies have health insurance; however, fewer agencies (89%) contribute to payment of premiums. Forty-eight percent (48%) of full time local public health workers have access to coverage for dental health services, but only 36% of agencies contribute to dental insurance cost. Ninety-one percent (91%) of full-time staff in local public health agencies has an available retirement program (up from 87% in 2002). Most full time public health workers (98%) receive paid sick and vacation leave. (See Graphs 7.3 & 7.4 and Data Tables 7.3 & 7.4)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the local public health workforce participated in at least one professional development activity during the previous twelve months. Fifty-three percent (53%) of agencies pay for continuing education for staff, 33% pay staff while on leave to attend educational training, and 28% pay tuition for staff to attend job related college courses. (See Graphs 7.3 & 7.5 and Data Tables 7.3 & 7.5)

ADMINISTRATORS

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of local public health agency administrators devote all of their time to administrative duties (up from 50% in 2002), and an additional 18% spend three-quarters or more of their time on administration. The range of educational levels of administrators is wide, from 5% with high school education to 23% with master's or doctorate degrees. Fifty-three percent (53%) of administrators have a bachelor's degree or above, and an additional 11% are working towards a bachelor's degree. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of administrators have been working in their present job for 2 years or less, and over half (51%) of administrators have been

the administrator for 5 years or less. The range of annual salary earned by administrators is wide, from less than \$30,000 (4% of administrators) to over \$75,000 (7% of administrators). The largest percentage of administrators (39%) reportedly earn from \$30,000 to \$39,000. An additional 38% earn in the range from \$40,000 to \$54,999. (See Graphs 7.6.1 thru 7.6.5 and Data Tables 7.6.1 thru 7.6.5)

NURSES

Nurses continue to represent the largest category of local agency staff with a total of 837, 26% of the workforce; however, there are 78 fewer nurses working in local agencies than in 2002. Most (86%) are registered nurses (down from 89% in 2002); 14% are licensed practical nurses. Seventy-six percent (76%) of registered nurses work full-time. An associate degree is held by 34% of registered nurses and 31% have a diploma. Twenty-eight percent (28%) have a bachelor's degree in nursing, 5% have a master's degree and 3% are certified as community health nurses. Part time RNs are more likely to have a degree than full time RNs; 49% of part time RNs have a master's or bachelor's degree in nursing, but only 28% of full time RNs have such degrees. All RNs with a degree in nursing have completed a course in the principles of community health nursing as part of their curriculum. An additional 64 RNs (13% of those without a degree) have also completed such a course. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of all full and part time RNs are reportedly practicing population-based public health nursing. (See Graphs 7.7.1 thru 7.8.1 & Data Tables 7.7.1 thru 7.8.1.1)

Seventy-three percent (73%) of agencies pay their full-time registered nurses an average annual salary of \$30,000 or more (up from 63% in 2002) and 27% pay between \$20,000 and \$29,999. (See Graph 7.7.7 and Data Table 7.7.7)

Fifty-four percent (54%) of agencies have licensed practical nurses (LPNs) on staff. LPNs make up 4% of the local public health workforce and 74% of them work full time. Earnings by full-time LPNs are mainly (79%) in the range from \$20,000 to \$29,999. (See Graphs 7.8.1 & 7.8.2 and Data Tables 7.8.1 & 7.8.2)

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALISTS

Most agencies (89%) have environmental public health specialists on staff. This group represents the third largest category of local agency staff after nurses and clerical workers (10% of local public health workforce), with a total of 337 (26 more than in 2002). Fifty-seven percent (57%) of environmental specialists have a bachelor's degree, and 6% have post graduate degrees. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of agencies pay full-time environmental staff an average annual salary between \$30,000 and \$39,999 (up from 34% in 2002), and 35% of agencies pay in the range from \$20,000 to \$29,999. Seventy-one (71) environmental health workers (21%) are reportedly state certified (up from 19% in 2002). Twenty-nine environmental health workers (9%) reportedly have national registration. (See Graphs 7.9.1 thru 7.9.4 and Data Tables 7.9.1 thru 7.9.4.2)

NUTRITIONISTS

Eighty-five (85) local public health agencies employ 109 nutritionists (3% of the workforce). Fifty-seven percent (57%) of staff in these positions work full time. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of nutritionists have a bachelor's degree or above. Forty-six percent (46%) of

full-time nutritionists earn an average annual salary range in the range \$30,000 to \$39,999, and 44% earn in the range from \$20,000 to \$29,999. (See Graphs 7.10.1 thru 7.10.3 and Data Tables 7.10.1 thru 7.10.3)

DIETICIANS

Fifteen (15) local public health agencies employ dieticians, 63% of which work full time. All have a bachelor's degree or above, and the majority (60%) of full-time dieticians earn an average annual salary in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999. (See Graphs 7.11.1 thru 7.11.3 and Data Tables 7.11.1 thru 7.11.3)

HEALTH EDUCATORS

Forty-four percent (44%) of local public health agencies employ individuals as health educators. Seventy-four percent (74%) of the 99 health educators work full time. Seventy-one percent (71%) of health educators have a bachelor's degree, 21% have a master's degree or above, and 12 of the 99 (12%) are Certified Health Education Specialists. Half (50%) of full-time health educators earn an average annual salary between \$20,000 and \$29,999, 38% earn between \$30,000 and \$39,999, and the remainder earn over \$40,000. (See Graphs 7.12.1 thru 7.12.4 and Data Tables 7.12.1 thru 7.12.4)

SOCIAL WORKERS

Twenty (20) local public health agencies employ social workers. Of the 39 employed, 77% work full-time. Twenty-one social workers (54%) are licensed. Seventy-seven percent (77%) have a bachelor's degree; the remainder, except for one, have master's degrees. Most (71%) earn an average annual salary in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999. (See Graphs 7.13.1 thru 7.13.4 and Data Tables 7.13.1 thru 7.13.4)

SUPPORT STAFF

Clerical support staff makes up 24% of local agency workforce, the second largest category. The 775 individuals (up from 736 in 2002) are primarily full-time employees (89%) and are the lowest paid. Forty-five percent (45%) of full-time clerical workers earn an average annual salary less than \$20,000; 54% earn in the range \$20,000 to \$29,999. The highest education completed by 71% of the clerical workforce is high school; 22% have some college, and 7% have an associate or bachelor's degree. (See Graphs 7.14.1 thru 7.14.3 and Data Tables 7.14.1 thru 7.14.3)

EPIDEMIOLOGY SPECIALISTS

Twenty-seven (27) local public health agencies employ Epidemiology Specialists; 93% of them work full time. Half (50%) have a bachelor's degree and 43% have a master's degree. Fifty-nine percent (59%) earn an average annual salary in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999 and the remainder earn over \$40,000. (See Graphs 7.15.1 thru 7.15.3 and Data Tables 7.15.1 thru 7.15.3)

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNERS

Thirty-four (34) agencies employ emergency response planners; 89% are employed full time. Sixty-six percent (66%) of planners have a bachelor's degree and 23% have a master's degree. Emergency response planners mainly (55%) earn average annual salaries in the range

from \$40,000 to \$54,999; 34% earn in the \$30,000 to \$39,999 range. (See Graphs 7.16.1 thru 7.16.3 and Data Tables 7.16.1 thru 7.16.3)

PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS

Physicians working for local public health agencies most likely are not on staff, with only 13 physicians serving as full or part-time employees. An additional 23 physicians are available as consultants for local health agencies as volunteers or on retainer. Only 7 dentists are paid employees of local public health agencies. (See Graph 7.17.1 & 7.17.2 and Data Tables 7.17.1 thru 7.17.2)

OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY STAFF

Twenty-five percent (25%) of local public health agencies' employees are working in positions other than those described above. Various categories of other staff reported by local agencies include fiscal staff, animal control officers, homemaker aides, janitorial staff and information technologists. (See Graph 7.18.1 and Data Tables 7.18.1.1)

**Total Local Public Health Agencies
Public Health Staff Percentages**

